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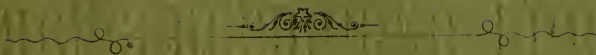
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HALF HOUR LESSONS

UPON

AMERICAN AUTHORS.

PREPARED BY

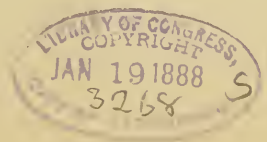
A. K. LEWIS (MRS. J. H.)

DECATUR, ILLINOIS.



HALF HOUR LESSONS
UPON
AMERICAN AUTHORS,
FOR THE
"SOCIAL LITERARY CIRCLE."

PREPARED BY
a. k. Lewis
A. K. LEWIS (MRS. J. H.)
" "
DECATUR, ILLINOIS.



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APR 23 1885

PREFACE.

The "Social Literary Circle" was established in 1885. Its object is for the study of polite literature, in a social way, and has met with much favor, wherever introduced. Its plan of study is simply arranged, not making any pretensions to being an elaborate, or deep course, and yet the depths are there, and may be searched for the jewels, there concealed. As will be seen, the lessons are arranged topically, and the plan pursued is, that each student shall only be responsible for the giving of *one* topic, though it is expected that each will endeavor to spend some time in extra readings. The meetings are held semi-monthly, which give plenty of time for the preparation of the work. The course covers a period of 100 years, and requires 3 years to complete it as now outlined, allowing July, August, and Christmas vacations. We say "Half Hour Lessons," for they may be prepared in the "half hours" of busy lives.

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
SOCIAL LITERARY CIRCLE.

ARTICLE I.

This society shall be called the Social Literary Circle
of

ARTICLE II.

Its object is for the study of polite literature--in a social manner.

ARTICLE III.

Its officers shall be President, Vice President, and Secretary and
Treasurer (in one), to be elected semi-annually by ballot.

ARTICLE IV.

Each member pledges faithfulness, in performing every duty assigned
in the circle, and prompt attendance at the hour of meeting.

ARTICLE V.

Honorary membership may be granted to those unable to attend
all the regular meetings of the Circle.

BY-LAW.

An assessment of 5 cents upon each member, for purchase of Sec-
retary's book and postal cards—at such times as is necessary.

Other by-laws, may be added by each Circle at pleasure.

Washington Irving.

In commencing this series of lessons upon American Authors, it seems necessary to explain why we say that true American literature is confined to the past one hundred years.

The "colonial period" in our nation's history gave us such minds as Roger William, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, and Benjamin Franklin; but *their* pens and voices were used in trying to settle the many questions of church heresies and dogmas, witchcraft, and philosophy. Then as we shade our eyes from the full and dazzling glare of the "literary lights" which illumine this last quarter of the nineteenth century, and go back on time's dial 100 years, we are carried into the dark hours of the revolutionary period, where we find a Patrick Henry, a George Washington, an Alexander Hamilton, and a Thomas Jefferson—all men of deep thought; but statesmanship and patriotism were the lofty themes upon which their great minds dwelt.

In those dark hours what do we see? Not peace, harmony, and love expressed by the press, books, and magazines; instead we see the glittering sword, spear, and rifle in the hand of every man. Not only was this true of America, but also France, Spain, Portugal, Poland, and Prussia were in a boiling cauldron of political and national commotion. The little handful of brave, tried souls, who were stranded on Plymouth Rock, had grown into a great army of rebellious children, and unwilling longer to remain tied to a grasping, unyielding mother's apron strings, were striving to cast off the hated yoke. During these years of toil and unrest, not one of America's brave sons or daughters had found a peaceful spot in which to sit down and quietly muse upon any theme. Nature was clad in as beautiful robes *then* as *now*; Niagara poured her majestic torrents into her mystic caverns all unnoticed, or at least unsung; the cloud-piercing peaks of Sugar Loaf, Break Neck, and Old Cro' Nest pointed skyward then as now; but mankind could not pause then to tell of their beauty or grandeur. Men were too busy turning their pruning hooks to swords, and women had only time to care for their husbands, brothers, and sons in their hours of deadly peril. The peaceful waters of the noble old Hudson sparkled in the sunbeams and glistened when the silver moonlight danced on the Tappan Zee; but the dwellers upon its shores were busy peering into the darkness, listening for the stealthy footsteps of the invisible foe, or the "rat-tat-tat" of the signal drum as they marched, oft barefoot, over icy wastes, or scorched beneath the August sun. Those were, indeed, dark hours, not only in the literary world, but in every home and hovel in the land. But the spirit of '76 must triumph, and light began to dawn when Lafayette, with his kindly heart and kindlier hand, which, alas! is oft forgotten

in times of trouble, had come across the sighing, foamy sea, to aid the young country to a free and independent life. Soon Spain and Portugal clasped hands over their bloody chasm, Poland and Prussia had to follow the example of their sister countries; the treaty of peace at Versailles settled the troubles between Great Britain, Spain, and France.

Louis XVI., the best but weakest of monarchs, laid his head upon the guillotine, and Lord Cornwallis handed his sword to our own noble Washington; and it had hung but two years in its scabbard when an infant's wail was heard near the sea, and one said to his neighbor, the Irvings have another son, and they call him Washington. And another from across the blue haze of the mountains of the Carolinas sends word to the sister land of the cold North, "We in the noble old home of the Allstons have a sweet-faced, gentle boy whom we call by the name which always stirs the pulse of every American heart—Washington."

After a brief interval of peace, the mother country, still smarting under her disappointment, must needs try once more—

"To come across the briny water
To whip her naughty, willful daughter."

But being again defeated, she returns to her island home, determined forever (as she could not help herself) just to let the child have her own way.

In the years that saw and followed this strife, the little Washingtons passed from the happy days in baby land to the full vigor of manhood, and Washington Irving, America's first "man of letters," found time to climb the mountain with "Rip Van Winkle," to perch in "Wolfert's Roost," and to rest and dream in "Sleepy Hollow." Washington Allston found a peaceful haven in which to sing his "Sylphs of the Seasons" and to touch with his Titian-like brush the pictures which have helped to make him famous.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

BORN 1783, N. Y. DIED 1859.

FIRST LESSON.

1st TOPIC:	Ten minutes sketch of colonial history.		
2d	"	"	revolutionary period.
3d	"	"	colonial writers.
4th	"	"	revolutionary literature.
5th	"	Ancestry and child life of Washington Irving.	
6th	"	School life and early manhood of Washington Irving.	
7th	"	Reminiscences of Irving's lady friends.	
8th	"	Account of and selections from "Salmagundi."	

SECOND LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: A sketch of "Diedrich Knickerbocker," with selections from his "History of New York."
- 2d " History of "The Sketch-Book," and its publication.
- 3d " First half "Sleepy Hollow."
- 4th " Second half "
- 5th " "Rip Van Winkle."
- 6th " "English Christmas" and "Christmas Eve."
- 7th " "Christmas Day" and "Christmas Dinner."
- 8th " "The Broken Heart," with account of noted persons who were made to weep over it.

THIRD LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Irving's trips to Europe, for what?
- 2d " Summary of his English books.
- 3d " Describe his Spanish travels.
- 4th " Summary of Spanish books.
- 5th " Selections from the "Alhambra."
- 6th " The "Engulfed Convent."
- 7th " Irving as historian, and biographer.
- 8th " "Astoria," with sketches.

FOURTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: When was Irving in the zenith of his glory?—with reminiscences.
- 2d " His different *nom de plumes*.
- 3d " Selections from "Bracebridge Hall."
- 4th " History of "Wolfert's Roost."
- 5th " "Sunnyside," with Irving's closing years.
- 6th " Explain why Irving is the connecting link between English and American literature.
- 7th " The charm to you of Irving's writings.
- 8th " Benefits accruing from reading such works, with teachings of such characters as Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane, etc. Volunteer work at pleasure.

The Irving lessons are culled from the "Encyclopedias," Irving's "Complete Works," "Life of Irving," by either Pierre M. Irving, Charles Dudley Warner, or others. Duyckinck's Cyclopedia is especially good for all authors.

WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

BORN 1779, N. C. DIED 1843.

FIFTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Nativity and early life.
 2d " His mission abroad—for what purpose?
 3d " Summary of his first poem, the " Sylphs of the Seasons."
 4th " Poem, " Boyhood."
 5th " Sketch of his career as an artist.
 6th " Describe his great unfinished picture.
 7th " " The Paint King "
 8th " Tributes of his friends to him and his peaceful death.

The " Encyclopedias," Different Collections of American Poetry, and " An Evening with Allston," by Miss Elizabeth Peabody, furnish material for this lesson.

James Fenimore Cooper.

The " literary sun " which rose in the person of Washington Irving—" the sun that was never again to set " while America stands a nation—began to light the horizon, and by his rays we see many other lights of less magnitude in the literary firmament, lights which give promise that their scintillations would soon cause the darkness to flee as before the day; and not only would they gild America's historic hills and dales, but would also stream away across the water to the mother country, sitting so proudly in her island home. Many of the lesser lights are so called, not because of less brilliancy, perhaps, but because they were more like meteors—seen and heard, then gone—while others of more prominence have been of the nature of the fixed stars; ever shining through years of literary toil and effort; shining yet, though the body may have long since mingled with earth's particles.

Intimately associated with Washington Irving, we find his friend and co-laborer of his early years, James Kirke Paulding, who assisted him in his humorous " Salmagundi " papers. His " Bull and Jonathan, and the Thirteen Farms over which they Squabbled," shows clearly the spirit of the times in the young country.

Richard H. Dana, born 1787, gave as his masterpiece in poetry, " The Buccaneer," and later, " The Idle Man."

Hannah F. Gould, two years younger, found many admirers in America for her sweet verses. " The Mother's Dream," " The Youth's Coronal," and " Gathered Leaves," keep her memory green.

It is our purpose in this "circle" to give to woman her place among the "literary lights of our country, and though at this time we do not find many who have attained popularity by their *pens*, save as used as a means of friendly intercourse, we do find a delightful assemblage of women whose high characters and brilliant accomplishments made them the chosen and valued friends of our "men of letters."

Among Irving's lady friends we find the name of Miss Mary Fairlie, a bright and vivacious wit, for whom he cherished a life-long friendship. She was the genuine Sophy Sparkle of the Salmagundi papers, and became the wife of the tragedian, Thos. A. Cooper.

Time fails me to tell of the many brilliant women of that day, and I must pass over the Livingstons, the accomplished Mrs. Jay, wife of our minister to Spain, and Martha Jefferson, down to Jennie Jeoffrey, the bonnie blue-eyed lass of Burns' sweet love songs. She was born in Scotland, but spent the most of her life in New York City. She was an intimate friend of Irving's, and it was said of her that "the simplest souvenirs from her hand were accompanied by a tenderness, a tact and a grace that made *trifles* precious by her manner of bestowing them."

Irving's friend, Mrs. Hoffman, did much to form his noble character. He being a very heedless student of law, was still much beloved by both her husband, and herself, for his bright vivacity and genuine wit.

We will glance, lastly, at another friend of Irving's—Octavia Walton La Vert, a Georgian lady—of whom the whole world had praise. She was called by various titles. "The most charming woman of the world." "The gifted daughter of the South." Lafayette, who met her when but a child, said, "Truly a wonderful child; I predict for her a brilliant future." Irving said, "She is such an one as occurs but once in the course of an empire." A distinguished writer said of her, "I defy anyone to sit for an hour in her company and not rise up a better man." She was possessed of that spirit of love that goes out from a great and good heart and meets everywhere response. "The world smiled upon her because she was gracious to the world." "Once when traveling by stage she was much interested in the humor and anecdotes of one of the travelers. At last he described a Spanish incident of which she had heard from a friend. She turned to him and said, 'You must be Washington Irving?' And so he was. Her friend had told her that Irving was a spectator." Thus began a friendship which lasted through life, and she was ever a cherished guest at Sunnyside. When she left there for the last time, Irving said, "I feel as if all the sunshine were going away with you, my child." Rev. John Pierpont said to her, on seeing her for the first time, "Octavia!—the *eighth*. If gracious Heaven hath made *eight* such, where are the other seven?" One other thought: When a friend once commented upon her beautiful foot, Henry Clay gave this eulogy: "She has a tongue that never spoke an evil word of anyone." May this be the practical lesson drawn from this little sketch of America's favorite, Octavia Walton La Vert.

Mrs. E. F. Ellet, in her "Queens of American Society," has opened many such avenues of pleasures for us, if we seek to enter them.

We come now to consider one of the bright lights of prose literature, James Fenimore Cooper, first great novelist in order of time, but *second* in rank, having to yield in later years his place to Nathaniel Hawthorne, who is called the "Ace of Fiction of America." Bryant says, "The creations of Cooper's genius shall survive through centuries to come, and shall only perish with our language." Independent in character and a strong patriot, he commanded the respect, yet awakened the animosities of both countries. Gifted in descriptive power, and full of the new and varied scenes of aboriginal life, his works are replete with interest to all who will follow him through his trackless forests, or over his bounding billows.

Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, for years the brightest star of poesy, claims our next lesson hour after Cooper. She was the first American lady writer to acquire a reputation in Europe.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

BORN 1789, N. J. DIED 1851.

SIXTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Sketch Cooper's nativity and childhood.
 2d " Reasons for his skill in writing sea stories.
 3d " What features of his writings made them so popular in England as well as this country?
 4th " Account of his first effort at literature.
 5th " Names of Leather-Stocking series, with review and selections from the L. S. series.
 6th " Describe his European tour.
 7th " His controversies on governmental principles.
 8th " Review "Red Rover" or "Vulcan's Peak," others of the L. S. Series, if desired.

MRS. LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY.

BORN 1791, CONN. DIED 1865.

SEVENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Child life, and home training.
 2d " Scenes of her school life.
 3d " Early literary efforts.
 4th " Selections from "Pocahontas."
 5th " "The Coral Insect."
 6th " "Niagara."
 7th " "Jesus of Nazareth."
 8th " Her "Valedictory," just before her death at 74 years of age.

William Cullen Bryant.

After viewing, in the bright galaxy of American authors, James Fenimore Cooper and Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, we turn our gaze to one of the meteors, John Howard Payne, whose one bright flash of poetic fire has left a trail of light that reaches into every heart and home. Baffled and disappointed, as he was in his conflict with the selfish outside world, he seems to give voice to his heart longings for the satisfying peace of "Home, Sweet Home."

Another—not a "meteor," but a light of mild radiance which calmly shone till more than four-score years had passed—is Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, of the old Granite State. Her "Sketches of American Character," "Sketches of Distinguished Women," besides many poems of equal merit, made her a popular writer of her day. Even after the infirmities of 84 years, she gave to the world one of America's most beautiful "Thanksgiving Hymns," breathing the spirit of love and patriotism:

"With half of heaven above us,
An ocean on each hand,
We've room for all who love us
And join our brother band.
Praising the Great All-Giver,
Our home-feast we display,
And through the years forever,
Keep free Thanksgiving day."

Jared Sparks, one of our first historians, has also a place in this decade, being for seven years editor of the *North American Review*.

Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, as scholar, orator, and statesman, stands prominent in our nation's history. He also had the honor to be one of the early editors of the *North American Review*. His patriotism is shown most clearly in his later years by his giving gratuitously his time and paying his own expenses while interested in collecting the "Mount Vernon fund," to purchase the home and burial place of Washington, for a "place of pilgrimage" for all ages. He personally raised \$100,000 for this purpose. This should be *his* monument for time.

After him we see rising from the eastern horizon a star of the first magnitude in the literary firmament—William Cullen Bryant. Calmly, modestly, serenely, shone this star, while almost a century of nation's turmoils passed by. America, freed from her grasping mother's embrace, had entered upon a peaceful, independent career of her own, and was busy settling the many constitutional questions of such vital importance to the young republic. Gen. Washington had exchanged his sword for the insignia of the presidential chair a second time. England had tried a second time to subdue the country, but failed.

Napoleon, too, grasping at the whole world, like an infant spreading his fingers to grasp a lap full of rosy apples, lets all slip through, he finds himself empty-handed and empty-hearted, alone in his desert isle, safe from all trouble with his brother man.

It was this dark blot upon the world's history that first stirred to its depths the fiery indignation of the boy who afterward became America's first great poet. While yet but a lad of 13 years, he, in a burst of poetic patriotism, attacked Congress, not sparing even the occupant of the presidential chair, Thomas Jefferson, for what he deems cringing in fear from Napoleonic power. So brilliant was this effusion that it required the authenticated statements, of many witnesses, to prove its authorship.

Contemporary with, and yet a little in advance of, so many of the world's master minds, Bryant's star shone and still shines undimmed. During his life Waverly's author was in the zenith of his glory; the authors of "David Copperfield" and "Pendennis" grew up under the light that shone across the ocean wave, and our own Longfellow, Emerson, and Lowell, 'grey-headed men when he died, were all his children in song.' What wonder, then, that Bryant, oft wearied with the noise and tumults, the battle-cries of nations, and the conflict of such diverse minds, loved to seek the haunts of the birds and to muse by the brooklet that

"Plays on the slope awhile, and then
Goes prattling into groves again;"

or to linger among

"Blossoms bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue."

In his lines--

"Wouldst thou rest awhile from the tumult and the frauds of men?
These old and friendly solitudes invite thy visit."

--we see the expression of this thought. His personifications of nature people his woods with life. This we see in his little poem, "The Wind and the Stream," one verse of which will be an appetizer:

"A breeze came wandering from the sky,
Light as the whispers of a dream;
He put the o'erhanging grasses by
And softly stooped to kiss the stream--
The shy, yet unreluctant, stream."

Only the old, yet ever new story. Other poets have written thoughts that are better fitted to create a wild enthusiasm in the public mind, in this rushing, clamorous century, but none have excelled him in tributes to God's great gift to us--our beautiful mother earth. Nature to him was but

"An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this great universe."

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

BORN 1794, MASS. DIED 1878.

EIGHTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Ancestry and boyhood.
- 2d " Give his views of his ancestors, especially his maternal grandfather.
- 3d " His earliest poetical effort at school.
- 4th " His next and first famous poem, "The Embargo," with circumstances which called it forth.
- 5th " Account of his courtship and marriage, with the poem, "The Song," commemorative of his shy courtship.
- 6th " Sketch of the history of his writing his great poem, "Thanatopsis."
- 7th " Read "Thanatopsis."
- 8th " "Lines to a Water Fowl," with cause of writing it.

NINTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Sojourn in Europe, with impressions of scenes visited.
- 2d " "Death of the Flowers," with its memory.
- 3d " First half of "Little People of the Snow."
- 4th " Second half of " " " " " "
- 5th " "Sella," one of his Christmas poems.
- 6th " "The Land of Dreams."
- 7th " "The Burial of Love."
- 8th " His Bible poem, "Rizpah."

TENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Give history of the establishment of *North American Review*, with names of early editors.
- 2d " Describe his efforts to publish his works in England.
- 3d " "Forest Hymn."
- 4th " "The Flood of Years."
- 5th " His translations.
- 6th " His closing years and death.

For Bryant lesson see "Poetical Works of W. C. Bryant," Bryant's Life, by Stoddard or Hill, "Bryant and His Friends," and Encyclopedias.

COMPLETE TENTH LESSON.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

Who opens up American literature proper? Give his most intimate friends (gentlemen). Name his special lady friends. Who was Geoffrey Crayon? What was Paulding's *nom de plume*? Who was Sophy

Sparkle? Who are the leading characters in Rip Van Winkle? Who was Brom Bones? What are the Salmagundi papers? What does the name mean? Did Irving meet with favor at once in England? Who wept over Irving's "Broken Heart"? Where was the painter-poet born? What is his most famous poem? What were his most prominent pictures? Where did Irving spend his latter years? What rank does Cooper have as novelist? Give names of "Leather Stocking Tales." What makes Natty Bumpo immortal? Why did the English people like Cooper's early productions? Who is the hero and heroine of "The Pathfinder"? Of the "Last of the Mohicans"? Give name of Cooper's best land story. His best sea story. What state gave Cooper birth? What state gave Mrs. Sigourney? Why did she first begin to write? Were her literary efforts appreciated? When born? At what age did she die? What was Allston's great unfinished picture? Who was Dana? Between what prominent writers do we find Hannah F. Gould? Who was Launcelot Langstaff? Who was the first American lady to acquire European fame? Who was Pocahontas? Whose poem speaks of her? Who was Ichabod Crane? Where and what was "Wolfert's Roost"? What was Irving's reputation as a student? Name some of the prominent statesmen of the Revolutionary period. Name the "church men" of the Colonial period. Where is Sunnyside? Name the prominent writers who were born during the decade from 1781 to 1791. Who are Cooper's readers generally at the present time? Who was the author of "Home, Sweet Home"? Where was he born? Who gave the "Thanksgiving Hymn" closing with the line "Keep free Thanksgiving Day"? What did Edward Everett do to ennoble his name? Name early editors of *N. A. Review*. Who is called the father of American poetry? When and where born? Died at what age? Name some great events of which he was witness. Who was President when Irving and Cooper were in their prime? What President did Bryant attack with scorn? Name first historian of note. Who were England's prominent literary stars at this period? What was the occasion of Bryant's writing, "The Embargo"? What prompted his "Lines to a Water Fowl"? What sad conclusion had his "Hymn to Death"? What author was Bryant's son-in-law? Name the grand poem of Bryant's old age.

Fitz-Greene Halleck.

Before we leave our last subject, William Cullen Bryant, let us linger just a little longer among the quiet, soothing gems of poetry he has given us. We have followed him from "Thanatopsis"—strange poem for a boy of eighteen!—through a long life filled with poetic fancies, and before bidding him farewell let every student go with him through his exquisite "Flood of Years" with its resistless tide, which at last swept into its current

"That good grey head that all men knew."

Leaving him, we find in the death throes of the 18th century, glimmerings of other bright minds, that were destined to illumine the dawning years of the 19th century.

Among the ladies we see enrolled the name of Miss Catharine Maria Sedgwick. Born and nurtured amid the most cultured people, it was but natural that she should use her own pen, and with such skill that she earned for herself a place and rank among her friends. "Hope Leslie" and "Linwood," among her best tales, were very popular, and her birthplace—Stockbridge—was famous only because she lived in it.

In 1793 was born Samuel G. Goodrich familiarly known to the school children of forty years ago as "Peter Parley." He devoted his talents especially to books and studies for the young. He says he wrote 170 volumes, 116 of them being under the name of "Peter Parley."

In 1796 one of our historians came upon the stage of action—John G. Palfrey. His literary efforts were all devoted to his own section of the country—New England—and her history; his most complete work being "New England, from Its Discovery to the Revolution."

A twin in age with Palfrey, we find William Hickling Prescott, our bright star, of the first magnitude, in the field of history. After being able for a few years to gaze on the beauties of nature, and to read from her wonderful books, an accident deprived him of one eye, and sympathy of the others soon made it necessary for him to depend upon others, for that knowledge, for which his mind was thirsting, that of history. Ten long years of patient study, through the eyes of others, laid in him the foundation for his grand superstructure, his "Ferdinand and Isabella." His "Conquest of Mexico" and "Conquest of Peru" also stand peerless on the roll of history.

Just as the light of 1800 broke on the world another of America's great historians, George Bancroft, commenced his career. From boyhood he manifested great maturity of mind, and a very marked ambition. One of his teachers sent the following message to his father: "He is a fine lad; he appears to have the stamina of a distinguished man. He has taken rank, among the first scholars in the academy, and I wish you would send me a half dozen more boys just like him." He published some translations of Goethe and Schiller, and a volume of "Literary and Historical Essays." But his greatest work is his "His-

tory of the United States." He had the honor to deliver eulogiums upon Washington Irving, William H. Prescott, and upon our country's first martyred president, Abraham Lincoln.

Sometimes the rays of light are so blended that at this distance it is almost impossible to separate them into their individuality. Of this nature, we now will speak of the firm known as "Croaker & Co," composed of two kindred spirits—Fitz-Greene Halleck and Joseph Rodman Drake. Halleck, by most authors said to be five years the senior of Drake, yet found in the poetic fancies and brilliant wit of the boy poet a valued and loved friend through life, and whose early death called forth from him the sweet lines, familiar to everyone:

"None knew thee but to love thee;
None named thee but to praise."

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

BORN 1790, CONNECTICUT. DIED 1867.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1st TOPIC: | Give sketch of boyhood and early manhood of Halleck. |
| 2d " | When and by what means did he first establish himself as an author? |
| 3d " | What was the nature of the "Croaker & Co" papers?
And give some sketches from them. |
| 4th " | "Alnwick Castle." |
| 5th " | Select from "Fanny." |
| 6th " | "Red Jacket." |
| 7th " | His masterpiece, "Marco Bozzaris." |
| 8th " | Tribute to his friend Drake. |

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

BORN 1794, NEW YORK. DIED 1820.

TWELFTH LESSON.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1st TOPIC. | His parentage and boyhood. |
| 2d " | His personation of "Don Quixote." |
| 3d " | Why was Drake enabled to leave the practice of medicine and turn to literature. |
| 4th " | Meeting with Halleck, and their great friendship. |
| 5th " | "American Flag." |
| 6th " | Account of his inspiration of "The Culprit Fay." |
| 7th " | First half "Culprit Fay." |
| 8th " | Second half " " |

Is this simply a fairy tale or has it a deeper meaning—with its sin, its tear, and its torch?

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

In pursuing this study of American literature, we find that the master minds of the world seem to have been moved as though by a common impulse, at different times, something like a contagion—as though the atmosphere was surcharged with each kind in its turn, and that the writers breathed it in as an epidemic.

As was stated in the opening essay in this course, the early writers of the country were filled with religious discussions and church questions from the time of Increase and Cotton Mather down to Jonathan Edwards, a man pre-eminent in his age, who was called the first man of the world in his period. This was the most natural subject for thought at that time, for was it not for this very *privilege* that the Pilgrim Fathers came to these "stern and rock-bound coasts"?

Next after this came a period of literary activity in a new field, statesmanship. Why? Because the state of the country demanded it. The church had settled its vexed questions, and the new country must be governed; and *how to do* it must of necessity be the uppermost thought of the thinkers and writers. The times demanded the men, and the men, with the mental calibre, were ready. The brilliant stars in the field of statesmanship, at this crisis, were James Otis, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, the *tongue* rather than the *pen* of Patrick Henry, John Jay, and many others, who, in their great interest, in the political condition of the country, were laying a strong foundation for the future superstructure, of the temple of American literature.

Next to this foundation of stone, which was saturated with the blood of the nation's sons, we find a *layer* new in design. This is called the true American literature. Of those who built and beautified this part of the structure, we find the architects to be Irving, Paulding, and others, who, sitting under the full refulgence of liberty's beams, could amuse themselves, and others, by satires, and criticisms, upon their friends and companions; but all in a spirit of good-will. This may be called the age of satire, and biography. Then follows a severe epidemic of historians, who wrought out in beautiful walls of thought, with windows of pearls, the history of the century just then closed.

In a little more than a decade—from 1789 to 1800—our four great historians, Jared Sparks, W. H. Prescott, John G. Palfrey, and George Bancroft all began to breathe the pure New England air of liberty, and to develop muscle and brain, whose power is felt to-day, a century later. The same atmosphere also gave birth to the spirit of poesy, as here we find Bryant, called the father of poesy. These writers, each in turn, have dealt, in their special field, with all the questions of the external and visible world in all its varied relations and circumstances; but as we turn now into the first decade of our own grand century,

we find not only a new century, but a new class of minds unheralded by any in the new world. These minds were not satisfied to gaze on the externals of things, but must needs sit down and penetrate beyond the bounds of the known and visible—into what is known as the ideal, the transcendental, the beyond experience—that they might discover, if possible, the hidden springs of thought which impel to action. Like the explorer, who, not feeling satisfied to stand by the river's brink, freighted with steamers and barges, and watch them float adown the stream; but must ascend by many a weary step the mountain's side, through many a narrow chasm and over many a rough obstacle, till he finds the little bubbling spring which gurgles forth the tiny stream, which soon leaps and dances on its downward path to the sea. Among the master spirits of this cycle were William Ellery Channing, William Henry Channing, A. Bronson Alcott, Henry D. Thoreau, and last but not least—or rather, in the scriptural way of putting it, “The last shall be first”—stands Ralph Waldo Emerson, styled by some, “The Shakespeare of America.” This brilliant coterie of kindred minds led the new school of thought not only around the “Hub,” but throughout the world. These “idealists,” daring to strike out in divergence from the established orthodoxy, of their church, only did what the Pilgrim Fathers were guilty of two hundred years before—exercising “liberty of conscience.” Of course, in the minds of many they were at once classed as *heterodox* and dangerous.

Now in the further pursuit of this subject let it be understood that the author of this course of study is endeavoring to set before the students the subjects as history records them, leaving each one to settle, if possible, for him or herself the truth or error set forth in the works of each author. This is *true study*. Suffice it to say that though some hidden mysticisms or idealities may bewilder the mind in *this study*, that still the fact remains that Ralph Waldo Emerson, orthodox or heterodox, has left behind him the record of a beautiful life, that in many respects all will do well to examine, and copy. It is said of him that after a residence of nearly fifty years in the home of his choice—Concord, Mass—“He was the foremost citizen of the place, sharing alike the love, honor, and reverence of all his townsmen, regardless of sect or party.” And one of his latest thoughts must commend itself to every sincere heart: “Unlovely—nay, frightful—is the solitude of a soul which is without God in the world. To see men pursuing in faith their varied actions, warm-hearted, providing for their children, loving their friends, and performing their promises, what are they to this chill, *houseless, fatherless, aimless Cain*, the man who hears only the sound of his own footsteps in God's resplendent creation?”

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

BORN, 1803, MASS. DIED, 1882.

THIRTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC : Ancestral sketch.
 2d " His child life and its promise.
 3d " College reminiscences and his friends there.
 4th " His earliest poetical effort of note.
 5th. " When and why did he write " Good-bye, Proud World,
 I'm Going Home " ?
 6th " What great sorrow inspired his finest and tenderest
 poem " Threnody ?"
 7th " " The Dirge," for whom composed ?
 8th " Give an epitome of his little essay " Love."

FOURTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC : Describe his experiences which caused him to withdraw
 from his church and ministry.
 2d " Read " The Problem."
 3d " " The Rhodora."
 4th " Read his essay on " Fate," and discuss it.
 5th " " " " " Beauty," " "
 6th " Account of establishing the *Atlantic Monthly* and
 of the Boston " Saturday Club."
 7th " The " Mountain and the Squirrel."
 8th " Whom does he consider " Representative Men," with
 sketch at pleasure.

FIFTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC : What proof did his townsmen give of love to Emerson
 in his old age ?
 2d " " Terminus."
 3d " His closing years, with account of his death.
 4th " Review, or read his essay, " Self-Reliance."
 5th " " Spiritual Laws."
 6th " " The Over Soul."

These essays should be studied—probably each one, with discussion,
 will fill a lesson, if so desired. Read through first, discuss afterwards.

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI.

BORN, 1810, MASS. DIED, 1850.

SIXTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC : Her early promise and causes of her great development.
 2d " Her early trials from her peculiar temperament, which
 matured her character.
 3d " Sketch " Brook Farm " and its object.
 4th " Her " Conversations," and their effect upon those inter-
 ested.
 5th " Give her opinions of the writings of Irving, Cooper,
 and Longfellow, the *litterati* of her day.
 6th " Give selections at pleasure from her greatest work,
 "Women of the 19th Century."
 7th " Her trip to Europe, and description of England's great
 men in literature, especially Carlyle, and, *vice versa*,
 his thoughts of her.
 8th " Her marriage and life in Rome. Her homeward trip,
 and sad death of herself and family when within sight
 of the home land.
 Was Margaret Fuller most admired for what she wrote
 or what she said? What should the study of her
 character do for us?

These lessons are prepared from the "American Men of Letters" series, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," Emerson's Prose and Poetical Works, Julia Ward Howe's "Life of Margaret Fuller," and Encyclopedias.

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Almost side by side with Ralph W. Emerson, a lady writer of great power—Lydia Maria Child—had a name and place. As a magazine editress, a biographer, and champion of the anti-slavery movement, she was well known. Her “Biographies of Good Wives” and “Women of All Ages” are among her best works.

George D. Prentiss, a wit and satirist, known to the world as editor of the *Louisville Journal* as well as a poet, had rank at this time among writers. His “Flight of Years” is one of his best poems.

We come now to another star of first magnitude, Nathaniel Hawthorne, generally assigned the first place of honor, among American novelists. Before entering upon his study we must go backward on Time’s dial, to find some keys that unlock the portals of his weird, fascinating tales, that at the same time charm, and almost curdle, the blood in one’s veins. We are carried back to those dark days in Massachusetts when the so-called “pious magnates” were, in their fanatical zeal, left to perpetrate enormous cruelties. These stern-browed Puritans, patriots, law-givers, forgetting that they had come to America for “freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences,” had scarcely kindled their fires in their new homes until they instituted a series of persecutions which were a fitting counterpart for any ever devised by the papal power. Quakers and so-called witches alike fell under these fierce cruelties, like grain before the reaper. When we read that since the Christian era nearly nine millions of people have been burned as witches, and that thousands of Quakers have perished for their faith, we stand aghast. In view of these facts, do we wonder that when young Hawthorne, with an ancestry particularly bitter, and whose hands were stained with witches’ blood, should have said that “even their old dry bones must still retain it if not crumpled to dust”; and dwelling amid many of the old haunted houses that were cursed by some survivor—do we wonder, I say, that so many of his tales should have such a heavy, sad weight of sin and suffering resting upon his characters. His own manliness, however, stands out when, after referring to these ancestors, says: “I, the present writer, as their representative, hereby take shame upon myself for their sakes, and pray that any curse incurred by them may be now and henceforth removed.”

While we find much that is dark and discouraging in this idea of the “heredity of sin” as set forth in these works, yet how the cloud is lifted as we look at Hawthorne’s own life. He stands before the world side by side with Emerson as they “view the great struggle between the two great forces,” and leaves behind him a record of a life not blood-stained, nor cringing under a curse, but of a happy, loving manhood, having done all he could to lift up and ennoble his brother man. Of her who afterwards became his wife he said, upon meeting

her for the first time : " She is a flower to be worn in no man's bosom, but was lent from heaven to show the possibilities of the human soul." But after winning her reveres her still the same. And she, in these few lines, gives the index to her soul : " My definition of *beauty* is that it is love, and therefore includes both *truth* and *good*." Her mother said, " I have not lost my daughter, but gained a noble son."

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

BORN, 1804, MASS. DIED, 1864.

SEVENTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: Ten minute sketch of Salem witchcraft, introducing Hawthorne's ancestry.
- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 2d | " | Boyhood, its promise. |
| 3d | " | College life and friends. |
| 4th | " | Earliest writings, how received ? |
| 5th | " | Read " The Devil in Manuscript," with discussion. |
| 6th | " | " The Golden Touch." |
| 7th | " | " The Dragon's Teeth." |
| 8th | " | " The Gentle Boy." |

EIGHTEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: His marriage and family relations.
- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 2d | " | " Fancy's Show Box." |
| 3d | " | " The Great Carbuncle." |
| 4th | " | Select from " Mosses from an Old Manse." |
| 5th | " | " The Miraculous Pitcher," with analysis of same. |
| 6th | " | " Twice Told Tales" at pleasure. |
| 7th | " | " Wonder Book," at pleasure. |
| 8th | " | Name his four great novels—with history of writing the first—" The Scarlet Letter." |

NINETEENTH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: One-half of " Scarlet Letter." Review and discussion.
- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| 2d | " | Last half of " Scarlet Letter." |
| 3d | " | One-half " House of 7 Gables." |
| 4th | " | Last half " House of 7 Gables." |

TWENTIETH LESSON.

- 1st TOPIC: First half "Blithedale Romance."
 2d " Last half "Blithedale Romance."
 3d " One-half "Marble Faun."
 4th " Last half "Marble Faun."

These long books should be read by each member in home readings and only reviewed and discussed in Circle work.

TWENTY-FIRST LESSON.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

- Who was Peter Parley?
 Name the satirists.
 Who were Croaker & Co.?
 What did J. G. Palfrey write? Name his twin historian.
 Of whom was it said, "Send me a half-dozen more like him."
 Name the four historians born between 1789 and 1800, inclusive.
 Who was the blind historian?
 Who wrote the "Conquest of Mexico?"
 Of what nationality did Prescott write his best histories?
 Of whom did Bancroft write?
 Name the great statesmen of this period.
 Name the "Idealists."
 What is Transcendentalism? Who was its great apostle?
 Tell something of J. Bronson Alcott. Of Henry D. Thoreau.
 Who was Margaret Fuller? Tell of her ambition and its reward.
 Whom did she marry, and where was her married life spent?
 What have you learned in regard to the kinds of writings, at different times?
 Who was Horace Greeley?
 Who were first interested in starting the *Atlantic Monthly*? The *North American Review*.
 What did Bryant feel to be his *finest work*?
 Where do you find the following quotations?—and give the remainder of verse, with author's name:
 "Green be the turf above thee."
 "The hills, rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun."
 "He builded better than he knew."
 "He who from zone to zone."
 "A belt of darkness seems to bar the way."
 "One of the few, the immortal names."
 "She tore the azure robe of night."
 Name the famous places of Irving's writings.
 What were Bryant's sacred places?
 Cooper's nativity and most noted landmarks.
 Emerson's home and last resting place.
 Name prominent men of letters born between 1790 and 1800.

Women of note for same period.

Who wrote "Biographies of Good Wives"?

Quartette of historians of this period. Nationality of their writings.

Who was nature's first great poet? Name his finest poems.

Who was George D. Prentiss?

Where have you read of Donatella, and what do you think of him?

Name first rank novelist. His three great American novels. His Italian novel.

Have you endeavored to "read between the lines" in all your studies with these authors, especially Hawthorne?

If so, explain to "circle" "The Miraculous Pitcher." Also, "The Dragon's Teeth."

What has your study of American literature done for you in this course of twenty lessons?

Have you found "jewels" in these mines?

If not, *renew* the search, for *they're there*.

For entertainments during the year, should you desire so to do, make selections from the authors studied, according to pleasure; costuming the participants in the style of that age. Best papers written during "circle" work may also be preserved and reproduced with good effect. Of course utilize your best elocutionary and musical talent. Songs by our poets blend well with the readings. Tableaux of some of the special scenes of the times may be made very beautiful and effective, or a series of tableaux may be arranged, illustrating a long poem, with selections from it, viz.: Miles Standish, or Evangeline, or from some of Whittier's poems; the "Sylphs of the Season" may be presented this way beautifully.

Will each "circle" send two of its best papers, at the close of the years' work, for me to preserve, and also utilize as a stimulus to others in the work?

THE AUTHOR.

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